



# NEWS

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This is an unofficial announcement of Commission action. Release of the full text of a Commission order constitutes official action.  
See MCI v. FCC, 515 F 2d 385 (D.C. Circ 1974).

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## **CONSUMER PROTECTIONS AGAINST SLAMMING ABUSES AFFIRMED; FURTHER VERIFICATION REQUIREMENTS PROPOSED**

Washington, DC – The Commission has clarified and strengthened its telephone slamming rules and asked for comment on whether to expand the minimum content requirements for third party verifications to maximize accuracy and efficiency for consumers, carriers, and the Commission.

Slamming is the unauthorized switching of a person's telephone service provider. The Commission has very specific rules imposing safeguards such as written authorization or third party verification when a person chooses to change to another phone company. There are significant penalties assessed to a company that engages in slamming.

The Commission took this action in response to various petitions for reconsideration of previous slamming orders.

In response to various requests, the Commission:

- Clarified that local exchange carriers (LECs) executing carrier change requests can be held liable for unauthorized carrier changes under FCC rules, and modified the rules accordingly. In so doing, the Commission declined to find that interexchange carriers (IXCs) should be held liable for slamming when the unauthorized carrier change was the result of a LEC mistake.
- Modified the “drop-off” requirement, in its carrier change third-party verification rules, to allow, in certain circumstances, a carrier or its sales agent, when initiating a three-way conference call between it, the subscriber, and the independent verifier (or a call through an automated verification system), to remain silently on the line.
- Discontinued the requirement that carriers file FCC Form 478, which reports complaints they receive alleging slamming incidents.

Finally, the Commission asked for comment on whether its minimum content requirements for third party verifications of carrier change requests should be expanded to include additional information in order to maximize accuracy and efficiency for consumers, carriers, and the Commission.

Action by the Commission February 28, 2003, by Third Order on Reconsideration and Second Further Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (FCC 03-42). Chairman Powell, Commissioners Abernathy, Copps, Martin and Adelstein.

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CC Docket 94-129

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